/55 cont./

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[71]

1. This kind of water wheel is propelled completely by water power. In the mountainous areas of Hunan and Kweichow where the water flows rapidly, such utilization of natural water power is very widespread. It is not found only in Miao areas. Sung Ying-hsing of the Ming period wrote in his Tien Kung Kai Wu: "The rapid water flowing underneath the wheel makes it rotate, forcing the water into tubes, one by one leading into another bamboo tube and flowing into the field. It never stops day or night; there is no worry for a hundred fields (see Vol. I, 'Nai Li /Grains/')." A kind of water mill (Illus. 31) used in the Miao area also utilizes natural water power.

The size of the water wheel depends upon the height of the terraced fields. By means of long and short bamboo tubes the water is conducted to near and distant fields. The terraced fields in the Miao area involve considerable labor. On a slope where there is a spring, earth is scooped out to make raised paths between fields, which act as dikes, going up in tiers, or stones are piled up to make embankments on both banks of a stream. These man-made terraced fields require a great deal of time and labor and are susceptible to drought. For they rise from the foot to the waist of the mountain, tier by tier, like a ladder, so that it is very easy for the water in the fields to leak away. But in the event of a shortage of rainfall, when the spring fed by mountain streams dries up, irrigation stops

[332]
[333]

[731]
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243 312 731 784 and a drought, ensues, an event which is greatly feared by the Miao. Every second and third month plowing ceases for seven days, and harrowing is avoided in order to ward off a drought. The period of taboo starts from the nineteenth day of the second month to the twenty-third day, and again, from the thirtieth day of the third month to the first and second day of the fourth month. According to Miao superstition any violation during the period of taboo would bring on the disaster of [782] [688] a drought. Only through prayer and repentance can it be avoided. The violators are required to provide chickens and pigs for the sorcerer who stands at the highest point of the slope to offer prayer and sacrifice (called the "sacrifice to the spirit of the high slope," see the later chapter, "Magic and Religion").

243 731 When terraced fields come up against floods, although it is not like the lack of harvesting of seeds in a drought, still often the sudden rush of mountain streams bursts through the terraced fields and destroys the structure of the fields. Moreover stones and sand often pile up, which is difficult to repair at once. Sometimes, the field is reduced to a steep incline or a deep gulch beyond repair. So, the Miao people toil all year round: 731 in prosperous years they barely miss cold and starvation. In 648 case of disaster, they are unable to look after themselves: the [432] weak sell their children in exchange for a measure of grain; [858] the strong form gangs to plunder the countryside. When the [579] authorities press too hard on these marauders, then widespread unrest often result. Thus goes the saying: "The Miao area has a small disturbance every five years, and a large disturbance every ten years." The reason is not that the Miao are by nature fond of trouble making, but that they are driven to take dangerous risks by the pressure of poverty /Illus. 27-31 appear on pp. 56-60./ [161] /61/ under a condition of overpopulation in a limited area. Hitherto, each suppression of a Miao disturbance by the government brought about peace, but it lasted only a few years before the outbreak of new unrest. Former administrators did not understand that the cause of the Miao disturbances

[text continues on p.89]

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731 648 was due not to human nature but to environment. A policy geared to the solution of the basic problem should try to improve the livelihood of the Miao and to remove the pressure of population through migration. Otherwise, Miao disturbances cannot be eliminated and will remain a source of trouble.

241 433 Restricted by the size of their land area the Miao seek to utilize every inch of land. Comparatively level land is made into fields to be inundated. The slopes from the foot to the waist of the mountain are terraced. The higher slopes are made into yü fields. On mountain land unsuitable for grains are [245] planted tung trees (Illus. 32), tea plants (Illus. 33), and pine [258] trees (Illus. 34). Oil can be extracted from tung and tea seeds, [313] and the pine tree yields lumber (Illus. 35), thus providing relatively good profits forming the major part of their income from auxiliary products. Hence, the Miao are experienced in planting the tung tree and tea plants.

245 The planting of the tung trees requires first the selection of a site where not only is the earth suited for the tung tree but where the location is convenient for picking and transportation. If the slope is precipitous, transportation is difficult, and moreover the seeds may roll down into the ravine while being picked. After a place has been picked, the "slash and burn" method of cultivation is used, first all the trees and undergrowth being cut down. After some ten days to a month of sunshine and wind blasts, the felled trees and grass gradually become dried up. Then they set fire to it, and the earth becomes scorched. The soil is dug after it has been well-soaked by rain. Digging generally is done in the spring, in the second and third month, and in the winter in the tenth and eleventh months. The earth has to be dug deep to loosen the soil so that the tung trees can grow tall and big and produce solid seeds, and live a long time. The selection of the tree is guided by the size of the tree and the abundance of the seeds, those of ball shape being preferred. The planting season is from the tenth month to the second month of the next year. Either seedlings are nursed for one

/157 cont./

*782 [292 843] his head and a long robe, and rides a horse. The women accompanying him must be gaily dressed, and no pregnant woman is allowed to go along. The men assisting beat drums and blow musical instruments and set off firecrackers. Led by a sorcerer-priest the procession stops at the intersection of three crossroads about three or four li from the village. The sorcerer-priest then shouts for the dragon, whereupon music and firecrackers once more make a great din, and the procession turns back. When they arrive outside the village, the host and the male members of the family, each carrying incense and paper, are led from the house by another sorcerer-priest to greet them. After the welcome the two sorcerers enter in a dialogue. The male members of the host's family and the maternal uncle salute each other three times. The sorcerer-priests [788] ring hand bells and lead the people into the house, and drums and music and firecrackers burst out in a great din. The maternal uncle and the other relatives return to their respective homes. After that a small hole is dug in the ground in the main house, in which is put a bowl of cinnabar water, which is covered by a stone slab. Upon the slab is a large rock, shaped like an egg. This is called the "dragon chamber." The sorcerer-priest rings the hand bell and utters an incantation, and the members of the host's family, men and women, go around the small hole three times, while music and firecrackers rend the air, after which the hole is filled with earth, with only the top of the dragon chamber exposed as a distinguishing mark.

(15) Warming the Ox Muzzle

*782 777 731 [774] Warming the Ox Muzzle is also called "Sacrifice to the Black Emperor Earth Lord," in the Miao language [ɹiɛ⁴ ɕioŋ⁴ ba⁴ loŋ⁴ ɲie⁴]. When the Miao meet with disaster or financial loss, they sacrifice to this kuei. The names of the kuei are [mp'ɑ⁴ tsuŋ⁴ lioŋ⁴ tɕɑ⁴] and [ɲiɛ⁴ tsuŋ⁴ lioŋ⁴ ntɕ'iɣ]. The time of this ceremony is during the day and the place is by the side of the left pillar of the main house. A table is placed next to the pillar. On it are laid 12 bowls of wine, 12 bowls of meat, and one bowl

/157 cont./
*782 of beeswax. The sorcerer-priest burns the wax, rings the hand
777 bell, and utters an incantation, in general saying:
●731

> "Recently the host has run into bad luck, frequently suffering losses. According to calculations, the Black Emperor Earth Lord or /158/ his descendants are seeking food. Therefore, today, I have been asked to offer sacrifice. Please eat the meat and drink the wine. You /plural/ are also promised a large bull. Please give your protection and bring about peace and safety."

[787] After the incantation, divination is performed with the chiao. The yang chiao indicates financial loss but immunity from disaster; the yin chiao means impending disaster without the loss of wealth; and the sheng chiao shows immunity from both. After the divination, paper is burned to send the kuei away.

(16) Handing Over the Ox

If after the sacrifice to the Black Emperor Earth Lord, one's luck is still bad, the only thing to do is to buy an ox and fulfill the vow, which in the Miao language is called [[illegible]]. Once this ox is offered to the kuei, it cannot be killed, nor can it be sold. It is allowed to die a natural death. The performance of this ritual is the same as that for Warming of the Ox Muzzle, except that the text of the incantation uttered by the sorcerer-priest is different, its general purport being:

> "The former vow being ineffective, luck still is bad. The host has saved money to go to market. At the market he looked around and saw a large bull, with big horns and a big body and handsome appearance. The host wanted it, and for a great deal of money he bought it and brought it home. Today has been selected as an auspicious day, and I have been asked to hand over the ox. I beseech the kuei to take it!"

After the incantation paper is burned to send off the Kuei,

/160 cont./

*782 [784] [776] [627] [778] are all forbidden. After the prohibitions are lifted and the sacrificial beasts presented, normal life may be resumed. The Miao are very much in awe of this shen. If one has drunk blood and taken an oath in a T'ien Wang temple, one would not dare to repudiate it. There are many T'ien Wang temples in the Miao area, the largest of which is at Ya-ch'i, Kan-ch'eng (Illus. 69), which is regarded by the Miao as holy ground. A Miao village without a T'ien Wang temple sometimes may request the T'ien Wang to come to the village to decide a case. He may also be [627] asked to go on an inspection tour, as in Illus. 70, showing the T'ien Wang of Hsin-chai, Feng-huang, who was asked to go to another village to decide a case.

Besides the two days of sacrifice to T'ien Wang before the Hsiao-shu period, the Miao may also write complaints, secret accusations, etc., and make vows to T'ien Wang at other [731] [755] [691] times in the event of danger, such as the ravages of soldiers and rebels, serious illness, or losing a lawsuit. A table is set up in an empty room, and on it are placed five teacups and a piece of tile. Chaff and beeswax as well as paper money are burned. The suppliant kowtows and makes a vow, and invokes the protection of the shen. In the vow he promises a pig or a goat, or both, or /Illus. 69 and 70 on pp. 161, 162/ /163/ an ox, depending upon the seriousness of his problem and his financial condition. A sorcerer-priest is also asked to come to the house to make the vow if the purpose is important. The table set at the [691] [731] [755] time of making the vow is not removed until the time the vow is fulfilled. If the case is won, or the patient recovers, or no distress is caused in time of war, the vow must be fulfilled. The things promised may be increased but not decreased. Even if the results shown are not as expected, still the vow must be fulfilled, but in this case the things promised may be reduced.

[773] [776] What shen after all is this White Emperor T'ien Wang? Stories vary. According to Miao Fang-pei Lan, Volume 22, there are three stories. The first was about the three sons of T'ien-chiang of the Han period; the second was about the three sons of the Bamboo King; and the third story was about the three brothers of

/163 cont./

773 776 Yang Ming-lai. (1) Yen Ju-yü is of the opinion that the third

1. Among the Miao there is a story to the effect that Yang's three brothers were the sons of a little frog, who were poisoned afterwards. (See the chapter, "Folk Tales," 1) Myths, 13) The Little Frog /not translated/.

story is more credible. However, the Yang brothers were the generals of the Sung Dynasty who subdued the Miao, and could not have won such high respect from the Miao. The present writers are of the opinion that the second story is relatively more credible. According to the Kan-chou T'ing Chih: "It is said that the mother saint met a dragon shen at Lung-ching-pa, Ya-ch'i, and became pregnant, giving birth to three marquis, who were braver than any man, and became generals." This story is identical to the story of the Bamboo King. Yen thinks that this story cannot be true, because Yeh-lang is located near today's Shih-nan, far from Wu-ch'i. But he ignores the fact that the Miao now in the three sub-prefectures mostly came from Kweichow, and the Bamboo King having a long historical relation with the Miao can therefore inspire devotion and awe from them.

(4) Ma-yang Ta Wang

*782 776 [753] 731 372 [82] When a Miao has a strange sickness or comes across a strange event, he offers sacrifices to this shen, for sickness is considered to be an outer manifestation of some impending disaster. If sacrifices are not offered, a greater calamity will occur. Sacrifices are also offered in the event of a fire or of a meteor in the sky. The Miao think that fire is caused by a meteor falling in pieces, and so then they sacrifice to this shen. If it falls intact on earth it becomes a coffin, and they sacrifice to Lu-pan (see later). Ma-yang Ta Wang is a wicked shen with

/163 cont./
the Miao, but its origin cannot be traced.

At the sacrifice a low square table is set up in a vacant area outside the main entrance, and on it are placed three bowls each of wine and meat. Each bowl of meat has a pair of chopsticks on it. Also a bowl of water with salt and pepper /la-tzu/ in it. Still another bowl has a small quantity of uncooked rice, as horse fodder. Three packs of paper money are piled up one on the other, with three sticks of incense stuck in among the paper money. Before the table is a low chair, on which is a handkerchief.

/164/ The sorcerer-priest wearing everyday clothes and holding a pair of chiao-tzu in his right hand, utters incantation. First he recites the invocation, after which he scatters some rice around. Each time he makes an incantation, some rice is scattered. After repeating this act three times, he starts divination with the chiao-tzu to find out whether the shen has arrived. If he gets the sheng chiao, then the shen has already descended. Then he starts an incantation to urge the spirit to drink wine. Then he states the reason for the invocation, and prays seeking the protection of the shen. After this he utters the incantation to send off the shen three times, each time scattering rice. At the same time the bystanders burn the paper.

(5) The Kung-an Shen

The Kung-an shen, also known as the Shen of the five wisdoms, gives protection against many things: such as pustules and ulcers, flood and fire, the six domestic animals not increasing, and the five grains not being fruitful. For all these they may sacrifice to this shen. But there are many grades of sacrifice to this shen, the first grade, the third grade, the fifth grade, the seventh grade, the ninth grade, and the twelfth grade, which must be performed in rotation. For instance, when a family offers sacrifice the first time, they offer the first-grade sacrifice, and if after three or five years it offers a sacrifice, it

/169 cont./

(9) The Kuei of the High Slope

*782
[731
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691] This shen is very fierce. They sacrifice to him for the prevention of great dangers, such as litigation and the menace of bandits. His protection must be sought in advance. The ritual is performed during the day on a hillside. Oil, salt, a knife, bowls, a pan, a slicer /ch'an/, and cooking utensils are brought along. They use seven flags, seven flag spears (made of bamboo, one end of which is slit in two, one half being bent into a triangular shape), seven stacks of paper money, one sheng of uncooked rice, in which is stuck incense and candles, a knife, seven piles of mi-pa, seven bowls of wine, one bowl of salted pepper soup, one bowl of chicken meat, and one bowl of cooked rice, in which chopsticks are inserted. The sorcerer-priest, wearing ordinary clothes and holding the chiao-tzu in his right hand, utters the incantation to invoke the shen. After the in-
*[787] cantation, he divines with the chiao-tzu, and if he finds that the shen has descended, he pours the wine and states the reason for the sacrifice, and asks him to accept the offerings. A recess follows. At this point the host kills the chicken, cooks it, and puts it in a bowl. At the same time he hands up a bowl of cooked rice /170/ and a bowl of salted pepper soup. Holding the chiao-tzu, the sorcerer-priest again utters an incantation and divines with
*[787] the chiao-tzu to see if the shen has agreed to give protection or not. After this, he burns the paper and flags and streamers to send the shen away. When the affair is over the chicken is cut up and eaten on the spot.

(10) The Kuei of Those of the Five Surnames Who Died of Injuries

[551
776
755] The five surnames of the Miao are Wu, Lung, Liao, Shih, and Ma. It is said that those who die of injuries become evil kuei. The Miao sacrifice to them to seek protection in case of sickness or of seeing something strange. They use a winnowing

/194 cont./

771 Thus, on the basis of what Frazer and Malinowski have said,
789 we can clearly distinguish between Miao magic and religion.
For example, in the event of a drought, formerly the Miao
[731] would ask their sorcerer-priest to catch the dragon in order to
[782] seek rain, but now they offer sacrifices to the thunder kuei in
[821] order to seek rain. The former is magic, and the latter is religion, because catching the dragon to seek rain is the work of a magician to get power, by ritual and incantation, to directly control nature: whether the end is reached or not, whether it will rain or not, is the responsibility of the magician. Offering sacrifices to the thunder kuei to seek rain requires
[776] only the completion of the necessary prayer and ritual: whether there will be rain or not lies within the power of the spirits and beyond the reach of man. After having studied the various kinds of rituals for sacrifices to the kuei in the foregoing sections, we can see that the magic of the Miao in Hunan has largely progressed to the realm of religious acts, magic itself having lost its practical value, but religion still carries with it some imprints of magic. Therefore, the religion of the Miao in Hunan may be called magical religion. But aside from magical religion, there is still preserved a small amount of pure magic. As stated above, magic is a practical technique, and so the magic now still preserved among the Miao in Hunan has its practical value. The magic of controlling nature, such
[773] as rain and wind, animals and vegetables, no longer exists today, except in their folk tales, where traces of it may still be found. The magic now preserved by the Miao may be divided
[755] into two kinds: 1) hua shui /drawing water/, which is a form
[754] of white magic used to cure sickness; 2) fang ku /letting go insects/, which is a form of black magic used to make people sick.

/168 cont./

231 If a village is plagued by many sicknesses, the Meau erect
776 a symbolic gate out of three crossbeams about 40 or 50 meters
from the village on the path leading to their settlement. Here
[731] the dog is hanged, and it is assumed that henceforth, as a
[789] guardian spirit, it will seek to prevent evil spirits from treading
[243] the paths that lead into the village. The same procedure is
followed before laying out a new rice field.

[764] In addition the Meau practice in different ways the custom
[775] of killing a dog when a human being dies; as a spirit it is supposed to guide the soul of the deceased into the other world.

776 My informant explained to me that over this whole host of spirits there stands only one spirit to whom they all, even the ancestors, are subject, "as to a king." He is invisible like all the other spirits, but in contrast to the latter he does not have human form, and lives simultaneously in heaven and in the earth, he is omnipresent. This chief spirit or, if one prefers, "high god" of the Meau, is bisexual, that is, male and female at the same time. He is the "Father and Mother spirit" of the Meau, who call him nă thu pen dọ nă thu /169/ pẹ̆ dŏ. Savina (1)

[114]
[773]

1. II, p. 243.

gives his name as Ndo Chu or Chu Lau and maintains that this chief spirit, according to Meau belief, created the world. I was unable to find any confirmation for this notion, however.

It is not his affair to determine birth and death, but he is turned to when especially important reasons come up, for in-
[931] stance, when evil spirits are to be fought, and therefore espe-
[825] cially in the case of epidemics and similar events. The animals
[224] of the forest are likewise under the jurisdiction of the high Father-Mother spirit. Therefore, the hunters must turn to him with their request for rich booty.

[773] The Meau told me that human beings do not know who created the world (concerning the legends about this, see the chapter, "Myths and Fairy Tales"). They also do not know who
[821] makes lightning and thunder and do not have any clear conception as to the origin of these natural phenomena. They pre-
[626] sume, however, that they are linked with the actions of the

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/230 cont./

A 515 Conditions among the Akha are somewhat more favorable, but likewise leave much to be desired. The personal cleanliness of the Akha, however, is unconditionally greater than that of the Meau. The people wash themselves regularly as soon as they A [356] are grown up; children are washed daily. The houses are always [296] swept clean, and the Akha seem to wash their clothing /231/ [364] more often than the Meau do. Otherwise what was found among the Meau applies. To be sure, hygienic conditions are somewhat 165 better, but they are still so deficient that a high mortality among [163] the children as a result of epidemics and sicknesses is unavoidable. Among the Akha, too, however, this mortality rate is offset by great fertility, so that the Akha, too, will certainly not be subject to a population decline.

A M 164 165 Prophylactic measures against illness are completely unknown to both the Meau and Akha, as is the nature of infectious diseases. Although I did not succeed in determining precisely the losses [751] caused by epidemics, the consequences of such pestilences were [753] easily ascertained. Merely the presence of sibless Meau, who had placed themselves as unfree under the protection of powerful large /extended/ families, showed this, as did the many widows, widowers, childless parents, and orphans. Whenever I inquired M 761 about the causes of death, it was said: "Died because of the vengeance of evil spirits." It often turned out, however, that 164 these evil spirits had killed dozens of people at the same time. ●731 I learned that once the Meau built a village in a country at an altitude lower than is customary and infested with malaria. When subsequently a malaria epidemic broke out they believed that they had chosen as a dwelling site a place haunted by evil spirits and they moved their village.

A 164 731 I could not find any moving of a village because of the outbreak of an epidemic among the Akha. Southwest of the Doy Tung there was an Akha village whose inhabitants had almost all fallen victim to an epidemic; from the description it was probably cholera. The survivors, however, had not moved the village.

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/232 cont./

A M 164 pock-marked Meau. Abadie (1), too, noted the frequent occurrence

1. Page 159.

of smallpox:

M 164 731 744 "The Meau are frequently afflicted with smallpox, but they react wonderfully to the simplest medicines. In 1911, a severe epidemic raged in a very large village in the Tha-Long region and caused five to six deaths a day. All the inhabitants were inoculated on one day, the aged and the children, the healthy and the sick. From this moment on there was not another death." Such results are of course, highly gratifying, but it is /233/ somewhat disconcerting to see inoculation counted among the "simplest medicines"!

A M 164 732 As among most of the mountain peoples of Farther India, struma is common among the Meau and Akha, which Marabail (1)

1. Page 463.

confirms for the Meau, and likewise cretinism. These ailments are more frequent among the Meau than among the Akha. Moreover, in both tribes the women are more frequently and more severely ill than the men. Some of the cretins found in every M 164 732 [753] Meau village do not seem to have been afflicted by true cretinism, but by epidemic meningitis and similar diseases. At any rate, the Meau told me on several occasions that these persons had been quite normal as children, but had suddenly been stricken with fever and were then tortured terribly by evil spirits. Since that time their minds were affected.

A M 164 [158] Mental diseases and paralysis caused by nervous or rheumatic disorders are relatively frequent. I was unable to find syphilis; to be sure, it may have been spread among the Meau in some places by Chinese traders, but it has caused no obvious devastation. Gonorrhea occurs more frequently, but still rarely among the Meau, and it seems to be completely absent among the Akha, which can probably be traced back to the strict tribal endogamy among this people. I could find no

39: Bernatzik--355 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 AO1 Thailand
AKha A04
Miao AE5

Volume Two

/259/ Chapter 13

Settlement and House Construction

A M 166 361 The Meau as well as the Akha of Thailand are seminomads who change their residence sites every couple of years. They decide on such a move, however, by no means lightheartedly or out of nomadic impulses, as Credner (1) intimates, but rather

1. IV, p. 70.

compelling circumstances induce them to undertake the indescribable labor of moving a village. The main reason for it is A M [241] [262] the exhaustion of the cultivable soil as a result of cultivating clearings without fertilization. Depending on the fertility of the soil, it yields rice, the principal food of the population in northern Thailand, for two to four years. After four to ten years, all the cultivable land in the vicinity of a village is exhausted, and the people must contemplate a move if they do not want to starve. Other important reasons are warlike events and legal A M [648] insecurity, especially in China, or the imposition of taxes that are too high, as in Burma or Indochina (see the chapter, "Cultural Change and Colonial-Ethnological Problems among the Mountain Peoples in Thailand," the section, "Attitude of the Various Colonizers").

M 166 361 [731] [756] [623] [622] The Meau also move their villages if epidemics have broken out or if the shaman predicts a misfortune for the village. Among the Meau the decision to move the village is made by the assembly of all the men of the village capable of bearing arms (see the chapter, "Political Organization," the section, "Popular Assembly"). In the assembly, the opinion of the chief, as well as that of the shaman, carries great weight. The wish of the two is decisive, not theoretically, but in practice.

/260 cont./

166 484 If the path forks, the head carefully puts branches over the path, by means of which those following can see the direction in which they must continue.

[207] In general, if there is no compelling reason such as war, [361] epidemics, crop failure as a result of rice diseases, and the like, [731] a migration is never farther than a half of at most a full day's march from the old village.

/261/ During the migration one always tries to reach the desired goal by the shortest route. Winding paths are taken only if there are pack animals, and then only as many as are absolutely necessary in order to prevent a breakdown of the animals. Otherwise, it goes straight uphill and then continues along the crest line; upon reaching the end, it goes straight down again, across the valley and usually through a brook, and then again climbs up the next mountain ridge. -- This kind of migra- [171] tion differs fundamentally from that of the Thai peoples, who always, as far as is in any way possible, follow the brook beds in the valleys and, when that is no longer feasible, cross the mountain by the shortest route, in order to reach the brook bed again on the other side. The manner in which the Meau travel reminds one very much of that of the Lapps and makes European [481] ideas seem positively ridiculous. They walk very fast and rest [312] often. In no time a water pipe is carved out of bamboo and makes the rounds, or a stub pipe of wood is lighted (see the chapter "Food and Stimulants"). Water is drunk from every little brook that is reached. Nevertheless they rapidly push onward.

During the migration the intimate association with the natural surrounding is clearly evident. They are constantly look- [283] ing for useful objects. Whether it be lianas whose fibers will [285] later be twisted into ropes, or those that, cut into strips, will later serve as plaiting material, in no time they are lopped off, rolled up, and fastened to the packsaddle. A squirrel is killed with a well-aimed shot of the crossbow and stowed away in the [224] pack bag; perhaps even a muntjac is bagged. The latter rarely happens, however, for, although otherwise they stalk game as soundlessly as wildcats while hunting, on a migration it is as though all the evil spirits were let loose. The shouting, hooting,

/265 cont./

592 621 [551] is the shaman of the village. Personal name, Plai Tschau; family name, Sen Ku. He is a /266/ brother of the deceased father of the chief. The housewife comes from the Meau village Muang Hu (north of Luang Prabang). Eight of her children died at a later age, presumably of malaria. Three of them [164] died only a year ago within one week, which indicates an [734] epidemic. The youngest son, 23 years of age, is completely paralyzed. He lives in the house with his young wife.

[513] House 4: It has only one open bedroom for the entire family, and one for strangers. The father of the house is a son of the shaman. The housewife comes from the Meau village of Pu Kung; she has three boys and two girls. One child died.

[342] [513] House 5: The walling of the house is merely halved bamboo stalks. It has only one sleeping area for the father and the infant. The married son and his wife sleep on mats on the [551] ground. The father of the house is a White Meau with the personal name of Tschai Su, family name Tau. The housewife died a short time ago and five children have died; only the oldest son and an infant are living.

[622] [551] House 6: House of the village chief (see the ground plan, Fig. 63). Personal name, Pan Sung; family name, Sen Ku (the Lao call him Tsin Tsai). By his first wife, who died four years ago, he had 11 children, one of whom died. By his second, present [587] wife he has two children, two and three years of age. His wife brought seven children into the marriage. In addition, he [595] has in his house the cousin of the White Meau of house 5 as his secondary wife, but no children by her. Two married sons with wives also live in the house.

House 7: See the groundplan, Fig. 67. The father of the [551] house is a White Meau: personal name, You Wu; family name, Tau. He is the youngest brother of the father of house 5, that [750] is to say, the cousin of the third wife of the chief. The housewife is a White Meau and a female shaman. She had seven children; three adult sons died two years ago, one after another, [731] of cholera. The surviving members of the family therefore fled [164] to relatives in Nam Fa.

39: Bernatzik--460 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 AO1 Thailand

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AKha A04
Miao AE5

Chapter 17

Means of Subsistence

a) Gathering

M 222 M [731] A 222 [262] [731] After the harvest the Meau regularly gather wild roots, tubers, and fruits. Beyond this time gathering is done only occasionally, for instance, on hunting expeditions or during migrations. In times of crop failures, however, gathering plays an important role and may even become a necessity for survival. Among the Akha in Thailand, who live under absolutely the same climatic conditions and whose diet, in accordance with their generally greater primitiveness, is less varied than that of the Meau, gathering plays at least an equally important role in times of famine. In years of abundance, on the other hand, it is likewise practiced regularly only after the harvest, but otherwise only occasionally.

b) Hunting

M 224 A [224] M [151] [184] Hunting is of much greater significance than gathering among the Meau and among the Akha. The Meau are excellent observers, have presence of mind, and are animated by a burning passion for the hunt. Since, in addition, they are excellent marksmen and have great patience and endurance, they have all the qualifications for good hunters.

With regard to the Meau in Indochina, who, of course, are in a far better position economically than the mountain peoples on the poor soil in northern Thailand, hunting seems to be less important. Lajonquière (1) writes, for instance:

1. II, p. 311.

M [411] [171] [389] "Hunting is not practiced as a regular means of subsistence but they are nevertheless skilled hunters. They use a gun similar to the one of the 'Man,' which, /340/ like the powder, they make themselves."

39: Bernatzik--671 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 A01 Thailand A01
Miao AE5

T 563 166 /495 cont./ Even though mountain peoples without exception are excellent warriors, they were still unable, with their primitive weaponry, to offer any lasting resistance to the numerically much stronger peoples of the valleys, for example, the Chinese or the Thai (see the chapter, "Military Affairs and War").

The extensively practiced cultivation in clearings without any fertilization is another reason for the migrations (see the chapter, "Means of Subsistence," the section, "Agriculture"). Since, because of this, the arable land in the vicinity of the villages becomes exhausted after a few years, the people must take to traveling in order to settle on new, fertile land required for laying out fields.

T 563 167 [651] That the fiscal policy of the colonial powers represents another reason for the migrations is shown by the intrusion of the mountain peoples from Indochina into Thailand. Persons belonging to the mountain peoples repeatedly gave me as the reason for it the fact that in Indochina they had to pay 12 ticals as head tax, but in Thailand only three ticals besides a small fee for each rice field laid out.

T 563 167 M 167 ●731 In addition, poor harvests caused by plant diseases or insufficient cultivation in times of war play an important role. For example, in northern Thailand, 60 kilometers from Tschiengmai, in the habitation area of the Lao, I met large Meau groups who were desperately trying to sell their beautiful mountain cattle at give-away prices to the Lao. These Meau had come from Burma, looked miserable, and reported that they had suffered a total crop failure as the result of a rice disease, and that they were now close to starvation and had to try by any means to find a more favorable region for habitation in the south.

T 563 166 /496/ Of special importance also is the religious attitude of the mountain peoples, who are strongly influenced by the idea of good and evil spirits (see the chapter, "Religion and Magic," the section, "Magic, Soothsaying, Interpretation of Omens"). The signs that are regarded as bad omens are innumerable, and often the shaman, after he has questioned the spirits, demands that the residence site be moved. Such a